

Mansfield Parks Advisory Committee
Minutes of March 4, 2009
Acting Secretary Eric Kruger

Present: Sue Harrington, Eric Kruger, Jennifer Kaufman, Michelle Baughman, Ethan Avery.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:35.

The Minutes of the February 3 meeting were approved with minor changes.

A. New Business

1. Just prior to the meeting, Betty Robinson was awarded the 2009 Distinguished Volunteer Service in Mansfield Natural Areas. The PAC is grateful for Betty's outstanding volunteerism.
2. Supporting Last Green Valley Funding- The PAC has agreed to submit a letter to the Town Council stating our support for maintaining funding for the Last Green Valley Funding. Michelle Baughman agreed to draft the letter for PAC approval prior to submitting it to the Town Council.
3. Town Council Referral: Feedback on relevant vision points identified in Strategic Planning-Mansfield 2020: A Unified Vision- A special meeting will be scheduled for the PAC to discuss and provide feedback as a group.

B. Continuing Business

1. Management plans:
 - a. Tom and Sue Harrington walked Merrow Meadow Park recently to check the water situation; the gravel placement seemed to help with keeping the area dry. There seemed to be excessive amount dog waste on the paved trail, dog owners using the parks are encouraged to clean up after their dogs.
 - b. Jennifer Kaufman recommended the committee members use the Natural Areas Land Management Plan Annual Review Sheets to submit comments and recommendations for their parks management plans.
2. Upcoming FOMP Programs-
 - a. The March FOMP did not occur since no one signed up to attend.
 - b. The Source to Sea programs: "Meet the Mt. Hope River" guided by Sue Harrington is scheduled for May 3 and the Willimantic River Greenway Mid River Trail led by Michelle Baughman is scheduled for May 16.
 - c. There will be Nature Reading Group events held at School House Brook Park on April 2 and May 7.
 - d. Michelle Baughman and Eric Kruger have volunteered to lead an MCC sponsored kayak tour at River Park near the end of June. Participants can rent a kayak at MCC or bring their own kayak and meet Eric and Michelle at River Park. A date and time

will be established prior to March 15th so that Michelle can advertise the event in Outdoor Magazine.

3. FOMP ideas for summer programs- Sue Harrington recommended a Butterflies program, a Tread Lightly FOMP and perhaps an insect walk in august at Merrow Meadow.
4. PAC Projects
 - a. Jennifer Kaufman and Sue Harrington discussed considering the PAC working with a group to build and install a bird blind at the common fields off of Bassett's Bridge Road. This could act as a prototype for a future installation at Saw Mill Brook Park as well.
 - b. Dunham Town intermittent stream bridge could also use a project to repair/build a permanent bridge. Jennifer is going to look into seeking a project from the Alternative School.
5. Planning, Acquisition, and Management Guidelines- Jennifer Kaufman is going to give the PAC members the final draft of the packet to help educate PAC members on the process.

C. Staff Report

1. Recent Acquisitions: The Town Council has agreed to purchase the Lion's Club Field. This will complete the connection between the Dorwart Property, the Luce Property, the Coney Rock Preserve and Mansfield Hollow State Park. The 4th and final acquisition is complete that will allow for all of these properties to be connected.
2. NAV workdays-spring schedule reminder- Every Saturday from March 28th to May 31st 10:00 – 12:00. UCONN students have volunteered again to assist with some of these NAV workdays. If PAC members are interested in volunteering on these dates, please call Jennifer first. Eventually, PAC members could lead their own NAV workday groups if desired.
3. Grants in Process
 - a. Commonfields Path through time- The town has received a two year extension plus \$6000 extra funding to fence in the area from the Healy property.
 - b. River Park- Online trail guide final edits have been given to the architect today and should be ready for print soon.
 - c. NEPA Grant Program: Rain garden plantings at River Park. The PAC has received the funding, the landscape architect has reviewed the plans with Jennifer Kaufman and the project is ready to proceed.
4. Walktober dates have been published; PAC members are encouraged to offer walking tours during this period. Walking tour ideas and dates must be submitted to Jennifer Kaufman by June 8th to get them on the list. We will cover this again at the next regular PAC meeting on May 6th.
5. Jennifer Kaufman asked if the bi-monthly meetings are working for the PAC. A monthly schedule was recommended by Ethan and Michelle. Eric recommended keeping the bi-monthly meetings in the winter. The summer

months could be used for the PAC to meet at some of the new properties rather than at the MCC only. Sue recommended the June meeting occur at one of our properties starting around 6 pm, with follow up meetings also happening at our parks through October. Specific meeting locations will be communicated later.

D. Other Committee Minutes

1. Conservation Commission
2. Open Space Preservation Committee
3. Planning and Zoning Commission

E. Adjournment

1. A PAC Special Meeting is scheduled for Sunday March 22, 2009 at the MCC at 4 pm to discuss the PAC's feedback on relevant vision points identified in Strategic Planning-Mansfield 2020: A Unified Vision.
2. Strategic Planning-Mansfield 2020: A Unified Vision
3. Future meeting dates/agenda items for meeting of May 6, 2009.
4. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric A. Kruger, Acting Secretary